

Southwest Area Mobilization Guide
Chapter 20 - Administrative Procedures
Section 23 • Equipment and Supplies

23.1 Mobilization

When ordering, resource requests for equipment and supplies will fall in one of two categories.

a. **Equipment.** Equipment items are major firefighting and support items such as engines, catering and shower units, and specialized items. The term “Wheels or Antennas” would cover over 90 percent of items ordered on the “E” Resource Order Form.

b. **Supply.** Supply requests “S” are NFES cache items or local purchases. Hard copy resource order cards will continue to be used for NIRSC supply requests until the NFES supply catalog function is operational in ROSS.

Refer to NMG 23.1 for additional information.

23.2 Demobilization

Equipment will be released to the home unit shown on the order and request number used to mobilize those resources. Equipment and supplies must be released when surplus to incident needs. Equipment release information must be promptly relayed through established ordering channels. The following release priorities will apply unless otherwise notified:

Engines

- (1) Southwest Area engines
- (2) Out-of-area engines

Fire Cache Items. Assemble and ship all items to the appropriate fire cache as soon as they are no longer needed on the fire. To assist the cache, all returned items should be accompanied by an OF 316, Interagency Incident Waybill, listing NFES item(s) description, quantity and incident name.

23.3 Fire Cache Procedures

NFES Cache Designations:

- 1. NFES National Interagency Support Caches** - Provides the broadest areas of coverage and service, identified in the National Interagency Support Cache Management Plan.
- 2. Local Area Interagency Support Caches** - provides direct support to more than one agency and generally covers more than a single administrative management unit. Service boundaries are determined by the cooperating agencies and agreements.
- 3. Initial Action Caches** - Generally provides single agency support to one administrative unit. Initial action caches may provide interagency support based on local agreements.

There are two NFES National Interagency Support Caches in the Southwest Area; located at Prescott, Arizona and Silver City, New Mexico. They are part of a national interagency network of facilities and procedures that provides equipment and supplies to wildland fire incidents nationally.

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- a. **Ordering Procedures.** All units of the Southwest Area have designated procedures for ordering incident resources and services. These established channels are outlined in the Southwest Area Mob Guide.
- b. **Large Orders.** On occasion, the caches receive orders where the quantity requested exceeds the normal stocking level of the item. Honoring such orders can cause unnecessary shortages. In cases where the order appears unusually large, the caches can refer the order to the Southwest Area Coordination Center Director for verification with the Incident Commander. When resource shortages occur and at Preparedness Levels 4 and 5, the Southwest Coordinating Group will establish priorities.
- c. **Returning Cache Items.** All local agency equipment and supplies will be returned to a local cache. All other equipment and supplies should be returned to the nearest NFES National Interagency Support Cache for refurbishing and redistribution. Returns will not be accepted for credit if received more than 30 days after the control date of an incident or the close of a project.
- d. **Hazardous Material.** Most incidents use petroleum products in their operations; gasoline, diesel, mixed fuel, etc. These fuels or products should remain or be recycled at the host agency where the incident occurred. Some fuels can be used for other land management projects. Fuel containers and tanks such as gas cans, saws, and pumps, issued from the cache must be purged prior to return to the cache.
- e. **Recycling.** Incidents will take primary responsibility for recycling.

23.3.1 INCIDENT REPLACEMENT GUIDELINES

The National Interagency Support Caches at Silver City, NM and Prescott, AZ will process incident replacement orders in the following manner:

- a. **Incident Replacement Requisition.** Prior to release from incidents, firefighting resources will prepare an Incident Replacement Requisition for items which have been lost, consumed, or worn out during the incident.
- b. **Type I and Type II Incidents.** The Supply Unit Leader will be responsible for handling incident replacement orders when a Type 1 or Type 2 team is utilized. The Supply Unit Leader will approve replacement requests by each unit, based on Engine Accountability Sheet or other fire equipment inventory documents. The Supply Unit Leader will determine if equipment and supplies are available at the incident to be used for replacement. If the equipment or supplies needed are unavailable at the incident, the Supply Unit Leader will forward the incident replacement requisition to the cache. This form must be complete, with "S" numbers and the home unit address (**NO** post office boxes).

If the unit is unable to receive the replacement requisition at the incident, the materials will be shipped directly to the resource's home unit address.

- c. **Type III and Type IV Incidents.** The incident's Agency administrator or authorized representative is the only authority to approve orders.
- d. **Non-Fire Incidents.** Non-fire incidents are usually reimbursable and may include non-Federal agencies. Examples are Federal Emergency Management Agency and Presidential declared disasters and Agency declared emergencies (i.e., New Castle poultry disease eradication), oil spills, rescues, and law enforcement actions. The procedures described above apply in these situations.

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23.3.2 MOBILE CACHE SUPPORT VAN PROCEDURES. Mobile Cache Support Vans are used as a means to rapidly supply a Type 1 or Type 2 incident with a predetermined list and quantity of various supply items. A contents list is available in the NWCG NFES Fire Supplies and Equipment Catalog in the Kit Section under NFES #2069.

Mobile Cache Support Van Locations:

The Silver City Cache maintains Mobile Cache Support Vans at sites in:

- 1 ea. Springerville, Arizona - WMZ
- 1 ea. Albuquerque, New Mexico - SPA
- 1 ea. Santa Fe, New Mexico - SNF
- 1 ea. Alamogordo, New Mexico - LNF
- 3 ea. Silver City, New Mexico - Silver City Fire Cache

Prescott Fire Cache at sites in:

- 1 ea. Whiteriver, Arizona - WMZ
- 1 ea. Kingman, Arizona - CWZ
- 1 ea. St. George, Utah - Color Country West Zone
- 1 ea. Phoenix, Arizona - CWZ
- 1 ea. Roosevelt Lake, Arizona - CWZ
- 1 ea. Prescott, Arizona - Prescott Fire Cache
- 1 ea. Flagstaff, Arizona - GCZ Flagstaff Office

Security and protection from damage to the van and contents is the responsibility of the unit having custody of the Mobile Cache Support Van.

The Mobile Cache Support Vans are to be used only for emergency incident support.

If the seal on the Mobile Cache Support Van is broken or it is dispatched to an incident from its assigned location, a resource order must be submitted through the appropriate channels and it will be issued to the identified incident. The host site is responsible for transportation of the Mobile Cache Support Van to the incident, where it will be unloaded and the empty van returned to the issuing cache. Deviations to this process must be cleared with the responsible NFES National Interagency Support Cache Manager.

23.3.3 REPORTING CRITICAL INVENTORY OF CACHE ITEMS. When incident situations warrant, NICC will begin monitoring inventory levels of the National Interagency Support Caches and NFES local area caches. A message requesting the needed information will be sent to all concerned.

23.4 Radio Equipment and Systems

23.4.1 MOBILE RADIO OPERATIONS GUIDE

a. **Operational Procedures.** All radio communications between agencies are restricted to mobile radios for emergency use and on preassigned frequencies only. Transmissions are to be conducted in a concise and professional manner. Clear text will be used in lieu of 10-code. Agency frequencies are not to be used for any other purpose than contacting the respective agency dispatch office.

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b. Agency dispatchers have the authority to enforce local agency policies related to radio communications and to prevent radio transmissions from other agency mobile radios if necessary. Misuse by individual units may result in cancellation of an individual agency's authority to share radio frequencies. The basic concept of individual fire resource utilizing another agency's frequency is as follows:

1. Units dispatched through normal dispatch channels to another agency may contact the receiving agency dispatch office on the local radio frequency once the responding resource is within the agency's jurisdictional boundaries.

2. Units may contact another agency dispatch office to provide notification of a fire, accident, or any other type of emergency which is located on that agency's jurisdiction.

c. The following describes unauthorized use of agencies' frequencies covered under this guide:

1. One or more units utilizing another agency's radio frequency for administrative use.

2. Units utilizing any agency's frequency outside of that agency's jurisdictional boundary.

3. Contacting agency dispatch offices for other than emergencies.

4. Failing to follow directions from any agency dispatch office who is responsible for the agency frequency.

d. When the local agency frequency becomes (or has the potential to become) saturated with incident management radio traffic, individual incidents can be assigned a tactical frequency. Protocol would then be that the Incident Commander, or designated person, would provide the communications link back to dispatch on the agency frequency while the rest of the incident communications would be on the assigned tactical frequency.

When a Type 1 or Type 2 Incident Management Team is assigned to an incident, the team Communications Unit Leader should contact the unit office for assignment of the frequencies to be used by the incident. The request will be forwarded through normal dispatch channels to SWCC. The Communications Unit Leader can then develop and implement the communications plan at the time the team assumes management of the incident and, therefore, they would not interfere with local agency communications.

23.4.2 ORDERING AND REPLACING ICS COMMAND/LOGISTICS RADIO SYSTEMS

a. Around February 1, ICS Radio Starter Systems shall be ordered by SWCC and pre-positioned in Prescott (National Interagency Support Cache) and Silver City (National Interagency Support Cache) during the fire season. Arizona will initially have a C1 System and New Mexico will have a C3 System pre-positioned. In events of multiple incidents in either state, a C2 system may be ordered through SWCC to NICC. The same command system (C1, C2, or C3) may be used on another incident without interference if there is a minimum of 75 miles separating the incidents.

b. When a unit has an incident requiring an ICS radio starter system, they shall place a resource order through established channels to SWCC for a system, including latitude and longitude.

1. SWCC Supply Desk shall place this supply request with the closest source.

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2. When no longer needed for the incident, the unit using the radio cache shall expeditiously box up and arrange for transportation of the radio cache from its unit to the National Incident Radio Support Cache at Boise. Unless otherwise directed, use “Commercial Air Freight” as the normal means for returning radio systems to Boise for refurbishing. Depending on commitments of radio systems, we may need to ship the system direct to Boise via charter aircraft.

3. Boxcar type lead seals for the radio shipping boxes are located in the Communication Unit Leader’s Kit, which is located in smallest numbered Tactical Division Radio Kit.

23.4.3 RADIO EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT

a. The resource order form will be used to document all movement of transceivers, control heads and portapacs between units. While the factory serial number will be used to identify equipment, the FS or NICC identification numbers on the control heads and transceivers should be included on all resource orders for reference.

b. An AD-107 (Report of Transfer) form will be used when Forest Service equipment is installed in contract aircraft. The AD-107 will be marked “temporary” and the pilot-in-command will sign as receiving the radio equipment.

c. 9600 channel transceivers, control heads and portapacs are to be returned to the accountable unit at the end of the contract period.

23.5 Atmospheric Theodolite Meteorological Unit (ATMU)

ATMUs are national resources that are for optional use upon specific request by an incident meteorologist (IMET). A total of four are cached in the Southwest Area: two each at the Prescott and Silver City caches. ATMUs are ordered via the Supply Desk at SWCC. If an ATMU is unavailable within the Southwest Area, the request will be forwarded to NICC. The Predictive Services meteorologists at SWCC are available to assist in obtaining the closest available resource. See Section 72.1 for a list of ATMUs and locations in the Southwest Area.

23.5.1 Portable RAWS (Remote Automatic Weather Stations)

Portable RAWS are available to remotely monitor weather and fuel conditions. Wildland fire suppression is a priority use, but portable RAWS may be available for prescribed burns, post-incident or BAER related monitoring or other projects.

a. NIFC Fire RAWS (FRWS NFES #5869) are ordered through NICC via the Supply Desk at SWCC. Fire RAWS are appropriate for relatively short-duration incidents, such as large fires and/or prescribed burns. The supply order needs to specify in the special needs section in ROSS as to whether or not two RAWS technicians are required. Where the need for RAWS technicians is specified, they will be dispatched without the need for a subordinate overhead order.

b. NIFC Project RAWS (NFES #5870) are ordered through NICC via the supply desk at SWCC. Project RAWS are appropriate for relatively long duration situations, such as BAER efforts and post-incident monitoring. The supply order needs to specify in the special needs section in ROSS as to whether or not two RAWS technicians are required. Where the need for RAWS technicians is specified, they will be dispatched without the need for a subordinate overhead order.

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c. SWCC Predictive Services meteorologists can assist with obtaining portable RAWs for any wildland fire incident, or in deciding which type of RAWs may be most appropriate. Additionally, the Predictive Services meteorologists manage three portable RAWs which may be used under certain circumstances. See Section 58 for contact information.

23.6 National Contract Mobile Food Service and Shower Units

NIFC maintains contracts with firms for mobile food services, mobile shower units, and water vehicles. National Contract Caterers must be utilized when more than 600 meals are anticipated and National Contract Caterers are reasonably available. Requests for mobile food services and mobile shower units must be placed through established dispatch channels to SWCC. The request will be passed to NICC. See Section 23.8.1 of the National Mobilization Guide.

23.7 Motorized Equipment

23.7.1 ENGINES. Three persons will be dispatched with all engine requests. Requests to “double crew” engines should be made when the resource order is first placed to ensure availability of personnel.

23.7.2 TRANSPORT OF FIRE EQUIPMENT ON LOWBOYS OR FLATBEDS. NICC will determine when resources will be flown and when to lowboy the support vehicles. Sending units will identify vendors licensed to provide interstate transport of equipment in their Service and Supply Plan. If the equipment is assigned to an incident away from the host unit, the dispatch center hosting the resource will assist the crew, engine, etc. to secure the lowboy transport service. The weight and dimensions of the vehicles and equipment will be relayed to dispatch. In most cases, the date and time needed on the request will govern the mobilization method.

23.7.3 CHARTER AND BPA BUSES

a. Charter buses (Greyhound/Trailways highway coaches) can be used for personnel movement if the total one-way travel time does not exceed 12 hours. This is usually for trips less than 400 miles, depending upon highway conditions and terrain.

1. Key items to consider before ordering buses are:

(a) Highway coaches cannot be used on unimproved roads.

(b) Maximum distance for fuel stops is approximately 700 miles.

(c) Maximum driver duty time is 15 consecutive hours of which only 10 hours may be spent driving.

(d) On some charters, routing will have to go through certain cities called “boards.” Be sure to check with the charter company to see if special routing is required as this will change the time and mileage.

b. BPA buses. Several companies have positioned buses in the Southwest Area during the critical fire season.

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c. Payment for buses signed up on Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements in the Southwest Area will be processed by the unit who originally signed the EERA, regardless of ordering unit. Payment for buses on EERAs from other regions and areas (e.g. Special Operations Group, Expeditors, Northcoast Emergency Services, etc.) will be processed by the ordering unit.

23.8 Commissary

See Chapter 20, Section 23.8, National Mobilization Guide.

23.9 Infrared Equipment

It is important to know the requirements and capabilities of each type of equipment and to know which equipment local operators are qualified to operate. When ordering, specify on the resource order which type of equipment you desire. Unless trained operators are available locally, they must be requested to accompany the system.

23.9.1 FLIR (Forward Looking Infrared). Handheld, portable unit that may be used from a vehicle, fixed-wing, or helicopter. This unit is available through normal dispatch channels from the Boise Cache.

The receiving unit shall be notified of services or other equipment that may be needed on arrival. This may include locating a source of liquid nitrogen (medical supply houses and/or welding shops), monitoring equipment, extra video tape, etc. The ordering unit will normally be responsible for locating and/or purchase of liquid nitrogen needed to operate the FLIR unit.

A “dewar” bottle (5 liter) is available from either national interagency support cache for liquid nitrogen. A “dewar” bottle is also included with the FLIR unit. Based on the arrival time of the FLIR equipment, the ordering unit must decide on ordering the empty cache “dewar” bottle or waiting for the arrival of the FLIR unit before purchasing the liquid nitrogen.

23.9.2 PalmIR 250 Digital Camera. A handheld portable thermal imaging unit that may be used on foot or a vehicle, fixed-wing, or helicopter is available from the Regional Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

a. System consists of:

- Handheld unit
- Extra rechargeable battery
- Battery charger Kit
- Instruction manual
- DC adapter w/cigarette lighter plug
- Carrying case

This unit can be ordered with operator if needed through your zone office.

23.9.3 Airborne Thermal Infrared Fire Mapping Unit. This unit is available through the National Interagency Fire Center.

a. Equipment is mounted in an aircraft and, when ordered, the equipment, aircraft and an infrared crew are sent as a package. Each IR crew consists of the pilot, co-pilot, and operator/technician. When ordering this unit, refer to and fill out the “Infrared Scanner Order.” It is recommended that when ordering the mapping unit to specify a MKII rather than a MKI since the II has color capabilities.

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b. An infrared interpreter with transportation, maps of the fire area, and a light table should be ordered to meet the incoming IR aircraft at the airport specified. All the interpreters in this region are qualified in GIS as well as GPS. This individual will work at the command post with the Situation Unit Leader or Planning Section Chief.

23.10 Guidelines for Sources of Supply Plan

Each unit will prepare a fire Service and Supply Plan that outlines procedures in securing services, equipment and supplies, listing key contacts, and identifying duties for crucial roles. Units shall maintain, as part of their supply plan, a listing of local vendors/sources and 24-hour contact numbers.